

**NSA INNOCENT**

*(temporary title)*

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY

A MAN, 30, races across the roof, twenty stories high... his breathing is ragged, his expression desperate...

Behind him another man, WICKS, is in pursuit... he's athletic, mid-30's, but has trouble keeping up with this jack rabbit...

EXT. STREET

Twenty stories below, a woman, BAKER, mid-30's, tough and sexy, keeps pace with the two rooftop runners...

ON THE ROOFTOPS

The MAN comes to the edge of the building... there's a yawning gap between him and the next rooftop... as he tries to decide whether or not to try it, Wicks comes up behind him...

WICKS

Listen, we can work something out.

The man just shakes his head.

WICKS (CONT'D)

We're not cops, we make our own rules... tell me what you want...

The man looks back at the roof of the other building.

WICKS (CONT'D)

... you'll never make it...

The Man hesitates... then JUMPS across the gap... he lands on the other roof, barely... for a moment he's suspended, balanced, but he doesn't quite have enough purchase to keep his weight forward... he FALLS. Wicks reacts, then yells:

WICKS (CONT'D)

Look out!

ON THE STREET

Baker looks up... jumps aside just as the MAN strikes the sidewalk with a horrible CRACK. Off Baker, grimacing

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Wicks watches as Baker searches the body, finds nothing of interest.

WICKS

Dumb bastard. Guess he thought he could fly.

BAKER

For a little while there, he did.

WICKS

... maybe he left something up there, I'll go take a look.

BAKER

Wait, here's something in the liner of his wallet...

She pulls out a piece of paper.

ON THE PAPER

A string of numbers, and a corporate LOGO.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Looks like a satellite phone number. And I know that logo...

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dr. PAUL FISHER, late 30's, intellectual bent but athletic built (Harrison Ford in "The Fugitive"), sits at a desk, working. The CORPORATE LOGO is in evidence on pens, coffee cup, stationery, etc.

His wife, KATE, also late 30's, pretty, mind of her own (Maria Bello in "History of Violence") is on the phone.

KATE

(into phone)

... okay, thanks, I was just checking.

She hangs up, begins pacing in agitation.

KATE (CONT'D)

Just like I thought. He never went to Taylor's house at all!

Paul mumbles a reply, not really looking up from his work.

KATE (CONT'D)

Did you hear me, Paul? He lied!

PAUL

I heard you. We'll deal with it when he gets home.

His calmness only fuels her obvious anxiety.

PAUL (CONT'D)

He's sixteen, Kate. There are going to be some rough times. Overreacting doesn't help.

KATE

Neither does doing nothing. He needs a strong hand and ever since this project started it's like you're on another planet - what's it been, almost a year...?

He looks up, starts to protest.

KATE (CONT'D)

I know you work hard, but when you're here, be here!

PAUL

I am here, and we'll deal with it when he gets home...

They're interrupted by the sound of a DOOR OPENING. After a beat ANDREW, 16, enters, playing it cool, no-big-deal.

ANDREW

Hey, what's up?

PAUL

Where have you been?

ANDREW

At Taylor's, he was helping me with Chemistry. I told Mom...

KATE

I just called Taylor's mother. You didn't go there at all.

ANDREW

... you were checking up on me!?

PAUL

Where were you?

ANDREW

... at the mall, all right? It's not a big deal.

PAUL

It is a big deal. You told us you were studying with Taylor.

EXT. STREET - A BLOCK FROM THE FISHER RESIDENCE

A van marked GAS COMPANY is parked at the curb.

WICKS (O.S.)  
 These people have issues.

INT. VAN -- CONTINUOUS

Baker and Wicks listen in on the Fisher family by means of a directional mic and speaker.

BAKER  
 Garden variety stuff. Every family goes through it.

WICKS  
 How would you know?

BAKER  
 (ignores)  
 Work checked out, right? He's good at his job, has the right security clearances, people like him...

WICKS  
 Yeah, but if he's got some kind of family crisis going...

She waves this away; he shrugs in turn.

WICKS (CONT'D)  
 You're the handler, it's your call.

INT. FISHER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The discussion has escalated.

ANDREW  
 ... none of my friends have to stay in on school nights!

KATE  
 Maybe you need some new friends. Who were you with tonight - Gary?

ANDREW  
 Why do you hate Gary so much?

PAUL  
 We don't hate Gary, but -

Andrew starts to interrupt but Paul overrides:

PAUL (CONT'D)  
 - you lied and that's unacceptable!  
 (beat)  
 There's one rule we've had in this family since you were old enough to understand English. What is it?

A beat. They hold a look - Andrew wilts a little.

ANDREW  
... tell the truth.

PAUL  
Well, you didn't, and that's the big deal. You understand?

ANDREW  
... I'm sorry.

The apology seems more or less genuine - and this might suffice for Paul, until he sees Kate staring at him.

PAUL  
(to Andrew)  
You're grounded for the weekend.

Andrew is outraged all over again.

ANDREW  
The whole weekend!? Because I spent a couple of hours at the mall...?

PAUL  
Because you lied...

ANDREW  
(overriding)  
You know something, you guys suck!

He runs up the stairs.

PAUL  
... hey, get back here...

But Andrew ignores this and his bedroom door slams shut.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Maybe I do hate Gary.

KATE  
(unamused)  
So that's it? He lies, tells us we suck, and he's grounded for a weekend? I think we should take away his car.

PAUL  
And start world war three?

Almost unconsciously, she starts pacing again.

KATE  
Yes, if that's what it takes to make the point!

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

You never want to take action, you  
just want to everything to be nice  
and smooth...

She paces a little too close to his desk, knocking a couple  
of papers to the floor.

PAUL

... careful...

Off this, her frustration peaking, she SWEEPS the rest of  
the papers off the desk, scattering them around the room. A  
beat, then with an effort she pulls herself together. She  
kneels down, starts to pick up the papers.

Paul watches, finally beginning to realize for the first  
time how upset she really is.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Kate. What's going on...?

KATE

We're drifting apart, Paul. You're  
in your own world, it's like you  
don't even see me sometimes. I've  
tried to tell you but you don't hear  
me. I don't know what to do any  
more.

He kneels down next to her.

PAUL

... I'm sorry if I've been distant,  
or uninvolved... this family means  
everything to me, and I don't want  
anything, ever, to come between us...

Her eyes fill with tears. She lays her head against him.

KATE

... thank you. I really needed to  
hear you say that...

INT. GAS COMPANY VAN

Wicks and Baker, still listening in.

WICKS

(deadpan)  
That's sweet.

Baker doesn't answer because, despite her tough exterior,  
she maybe thinks it is kind of sweet. Wicks studies her for  
a beat, surprised. She ignores him. We go back to:

INT. FISHER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

PAUL  
... you remember how we used to go  
out every Friday, no matter what?

KATE  
(smiles)  
... date night.

PAUL  
You got any plans for this Friday?

KATE  
I'll have to check with my social  
secretary, but I think I'm free...

PAUL  
Pinetto's, eight o'clock. I may  
have to meet you there from work...

KATE  
That'll be fine.

They hold an affectionate look - their problems aren't solved,  
by any means, but there's a sense that an important step has  
been taken. Off this

CUT TO:

INT. GAS COMPANY VAN

Baker and Wicks, as before. Baker turns off the mic.

BAKER  
We've got enough. He's a pretty  
straight shooter, like we thought.

WICKS  
(deadpan)  
You've fallen for this guy, haven't  
you?

She rolls her eyes, Wicks chuckles at his own wit.

WICKS (CONT'D)  
I guess he'll do. Question is, will  
he cooperate?

BAKER  
We'll just have to see that he does.

Off this

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CLAYMORE INDUSTRY TESTING GROUNDS - DAY

Somewhere in the desert outside L.A., a stretch of barren landscape baking under the sun. High in the sky --

A DRONE

Circles. It's a small light plane, un-piloted. As it circles, a RED DOT paints the fuselage. On the desert floor, we discover the source of the dot --

A TESTING STATION

Which contains a platform-mounted LASER, three men and a woman. Most prominent is Paul. Next to him, peering through a siting mechanism on the laser is BARRY, mid 20's; we'll shortly come to realize he's a bit of a loose cannon.

Also present are JEFF, LAURA, both about Barry's age. A worn company pick-up truck sits on the utility road nearby.

Paul turns to Barry who peers through the siting mechanism.

PAUL

Barry, you got it calibrated?

BARRY

It's still a hair off. Give me a sec.

Barry adjusts the site with a screw driver. Then he switches off the laser. The beam disappears. Paul turns to Jeff.

PAUL

Tell Control we're ready.

Jeff removes a two-way radio clipped to his belt and speaks.

JEFF

Circle the drone one more time.  
We're initiating the test.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Copy that.

Paul watches the drone, then turns to Barry.

PAUL

You have the a-chip?

As Barry digs out the chip from a case, they hear the sound of a car engine and turn to see a 700 Series black BMW coming at them over the utility road.

The car pulls up, and FRANK CONROY, mid-40's, dressed in a custom-made suit, emerges.

BARRY

Just what we need. A visit from Darth Vader.

(to Paul)

Sorry. I know he's family.

PAUL

Only by marriage.

The group watches warily as Frank makes his way over.

PAUL (CONT'D)

There a problem, Frank?

FRANK

You tell me. I just spoke with General Barnes at Defense. He was all over me about the a-chip. I told him we're making good progress.

(edge)

I hope that's true.

Barry bristles at this, but Paul keeps his cool.

PAUL

See for yourself. Barry...

Paul nods to Barry, who opens the laser's housing, removes a chip, then carefully takes a different chip which Laura hands him. He snaps the new chip into place and says, with a strange mixture of pride and contempt:

BARRY

The auto-calibrated, synchronized, augmentation chip, is now in place.

Barry presses a button. A very intense beam shoots from the laser into the air --

ON THE DRONE

The beam paints the hull of the drone -- in the first second it glows RED with heat, and in the next EXPLODES in a ball of flame, falling from the sky onto the desert.

FRANK

... My God... how soon can we show this to the General?

PAUL

A few more weeks.

FRANK

Weeks? This thing's ready now.

PAUL

There's more testing to do.  
Atmospherics, for one thing.

FRANK

Speed it up. You can start by working  
on it tonight.

PAUL

Not tonight. I have to be somewhere.

FRANK

Where?

PAUL

As a matter of fact I'm having dinner  
with Kate.

FRANK

Well, I'm glad you're making my little  
sister happy. But start tomorrow -  
I want this moved along.

PAUL

You'll get it when it's ready.

FRANK

Dammit, related or not, I'm still  
your boss.

PAUL

Maybe you should fire me, take over  
the project yourself. You could do  
that, right?

FRANK

You may be the big genius, but I'm  
the one they put in management. And  
I want this project on the fast track,  
got it?

PAUL

Sure. Starting tomorrow.

Frank glances at the unsympathetic faces of the rest of the team, decides he's salvaged as much dignity as he can. He turns and walks to his car. Paul turns back to the others.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Come on, let's pack up.

BARRY

I can do the atmospheric report if  
you want.

PAUL

How? We haven't run the tests yet.

BARRY

We pretty much know what the results  
are going to be, give or take.

(off Paul's look)

Why not give them what they want?  
What difference does it really make?

Jeff and Laura, like Paul, are a little shocked by this.

LAURA

... you don't mean that...

BARRY

Laura, you know what, I don't need  
you to tell me what I mean or don't  
mean.

Laura retreats, hurt.

PAUL

(to Barry)

We're scientists, remember? We're  
about truth, inside the lab and out.

BARRY

And the merit badge for empty  
platitudes goes to... Paul Fisher!

Paul looks at Laura and Jeff, who look away, embarrassed for  
Barry. Paul looks back at Barry, who shakes his head...

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh, God, I feel a save-Barry-from-  
himself session coming on... I am  
not in the mood for one of those,  
okay, I'm just not...

CUT TO:

INT. UPSCALE BAR

Barry's getting the session whether he wants it or not.  
Paul sits across from him, both nursing beers.

BARRY

... look, I'm sorry, okay?

PAUL

I'm not looking for an apology, I  
just want to know what's wrong.

BARRY

I'm bipolar, tired, pregnant... take  
your pick.

Paul, as his custom, stays calm.

PAUL

You getting tired of the project?

BARRY

This project, that project, they're all the same, we make things, they use 'em to kill people. I mean, it's been going on for ten thousand years, do you realize that? Better axes, better bows, better swords, better lasers...

PAUL

You've been working here for five years, suddenly you feel guilty.

BARRY

Maybe.

Barry holds his look for a beat, then has to look away. Both men know the guilt thing doesn't hold water.

PAUL

What, then? Everything okay with Laura?

BARRY

Yeah, fine, she's a great girl. Better than I deserve.

(beat)

Look, you want a simple answer. I can't give you one. I am what I am. I guess that's the problem.

(beat)

But you knew that when you hired me.

A beat. Paul smiles slightly.

PAUL

Being your boss hasn't always been easy, but I've stuck with it for two reasons. One, you're brilliant. And two - I feel like we've become friends. And I don't think you have too many of those.

Barry looks up - then gives a small nod of acknowledgement and, maybe, appreciation. He seems a little chastened.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You want a change, I'll help you. Leave of absence, transfer - I'll even help you find a job with another company if that's what you want.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

But this project, the a-chip, it's important to me, and a lot of other people, too. I just need you to hang in there for a few more weeks. Can you do that?

BARRY

... yeah. Sure.

PAUL

Thank you.

He glances at his watch, stands.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I have to go. I'll see you tomorrow.

He tosses a bill on the table, pats Barry on the shoulder, then leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Paul dials his cell as he walks toward his car. The lot is nearly deserted, but not far away is the van with the gas company logo and lettering.

PAUL

(into cell)

Kate?

INT. FISHER HOME - BEDROOM - INTERCUT:

Kate stands in front of a full length mirror, dressed attractively for their evening out. She checks her outfit as she talks on the phone.

KATE

(into phone)

Where are you?

PAUL

Just leaving.

KATE

Me, too. I'll meet you there in twenty minutes.

Kate does a last second touch up on her hair.

PAUL

I had a narrow escape - your brother wanted me to stay.

KATE

How'd you get out of it?

PAUL

Told him the truth - I had a hot date.

KATE

(laughs)

See you soon.

PAUL

Love you.

KATE

Love you, too.

They both hang up, with a sense of anticipation. Paul takes out his keys, starts to get into his car... when

WICKS

grabs him from behind... the briefcase and keys hit the ground... Baker is there, too, watching as a second MAN appears and helps drag Paul

INSIDE THE VAN

Where he's strapped to a seat and a gag is stuffed into his mouth - once Paul is secured, Wicks climbs into the driver's seat, starts the engine.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Baker picks up Paul's briefcase and keys, and gets into Paul's car. The two vehicles pull away....

INSIDE THE VAN

Paul struggles against the straps... outside streetlights and headlights flash by... he can see his own car keeping pace with the van... it all happens so fast he doesn't register any coherent thoughts - just sheer terror...

EXT. QUIET URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A mixed business and residential area. The van and Paul's car glide to a stop at the curb, one behind the other. Baker gets out of Paul's car, walks to the van.

INSIDE THE VAN

The door opens, she gets in. A small light comes on, and Wicks takes off Paul's gag.

PAUL

...who are you? What do you want?

BAKER

Dr. Fisher, I apologize for the rough treatment, and I promise we won't hurt you in any way. I'm Sara Baker. This is Tom Wicks. We're with the National Security Agency.

Under this they show Paul their badges.

PAUL

... NSA... why are you doing this?

BAKER

We had to talk to you tonight and we had to do it with absolute secrecy.

Under this Wicks unstraps Paul's arms and legs.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Are you all right?

PAUL

No, I'm not all right. Are you insane? You scared the hell out of me. What do you want?

BAKER

You're lead scientist of a research project which involves a new laser technology called the a-chip.

Paul doesn't answer.

BAKER (CONT'D)

It's our business to know that kind of thing, Dr. Fisher.

PAUL

Then you also know it's a classified project and I'm not going to tell you a damn thing.

BAKER

Actually, we're here to tell you something.

PAUL

What's that?

BAKER

Someone's planning to sell the a-chip technology to a foreign country.

PAUL

... what are you talking about? Who...?

BAKER

Barry Meyers.

PAUL

... that's ridiculous...

BAKER

He's unstable, Dr. Fisher. You must know that.

WICKS

You just had a drink with him, didn't you? What did you talk about?

PAUL

... some behavior that was... unprofessional. But that doesn't make him a traitor...

But underneath his denials, slight doubt is already creeping in and they sense it. Paul lashes out:

PAUL (CONT'D)

How do I know you're really NSA? You could have got those badges anywhere.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. N.D. APARTMENT BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

Paul and the agents enter a small foyer, with mailboxes, a tenant roster with buzzers, and a second door. Wicks places a plastic card on the door - there's a CLICK and it opens.

INT. THROUGH THE DOOR -- CONTINUOUS

A different world. Various work stations with laptops and other high-tech equipment. This is the real deal, and Paul knows it. A half dozen people are at work as Wicks and Baker escort Paul down a hallway to a small room.

TIME CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ROOM -- LATER

The room is dark except for a laptop screen, which Baker and Wicks are using to bring Paul up to speed. The LAPTOP shows surveillance shots of the man who fell from the roof earlier.

WICKS

This is Bertrand Yates, a known agent for buyers of black market technology. He was killed yesterday morning.

Now the laptop shows the paper with the logo and number.

WICKS (CONT'D)

This document was in his pocket. It has your company's logo and a satellite phone number. The phone belongs to Barry Meyers.

The laptop now shows a headshot of Barry.

BAKER

We also intercepted some emails from your company's server. We traced the digital signatures to Barry's desktop.

PAUL

What kind of emails?

BAKER

We can't tell you that, but they were compromising.

PAUL

... why don't you arrest him?

BAKER

Because we don't know who he's selling to. And that's crucial. If a foreign power gets this technology, they could threaten our air force, even our satellites. We'd be blind.

Before Paul can respond, his CELL RINGS. He checks it.

PAUL

... my wife. She's expecting me...

BAKER

Make up an excuse.

Paul hesitates, turns on the phone.

PAUL

Honey...?

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - INTERCUT:

Kate is on the other end, at a corner table. She's got an open bottle of wine in front of her. She's worried...

KATE

Are you all right?

PAUL

I was just about to call, I'm not going to be able to make it...

Kate goes from worried to pissed.

KATE

What the hell, Paul, I've been sitting here for an hour.

PAUL

I know. I'm sorry. One of our programs crashed... I had to go back.

KATE

You couldn't have called me?

PAUL

I thought it'd only be a few minutes ... but it's going to be a while...

KATE

I thought this was important. A new start.

PAUL

It is important...

KATE

But not important enough.

She hangs up and tosses her napkin on the table, upset.

INT. NSA OFFICE

Paul has also hung up. He glares at Baker.

PAUL

Your timing couldn't be much worse.

BAKER

Sorry, but secrecy is essential, especially from your wife.

(off his look)

Her brother works for the company. The slightest change in her behavior or his might tip Barry that we're on to him. You understand that.

Paul nods.

WICKS

We need your help, Dr. Fisher. And it's your weapon, your protege...

Paul squirms, uncomfortable.

PAUL

What exactly do you want me to do?

BAKER

Barry's meeting a contact at the company party tomorrow night.

WICKS

At some point, he'll get a phone call. Follow him. See who he meets.

Wicks holds out a special cell phone.

WICKS (CONT'D)

Take a picture with this. You don't need much light and you don't need to be close. Just make sure you get the face.

Baker holds out a slip of paper.

BAKER

This is my number. Contact me any time you need to.

Paul looks at the paper and the phone but takes neither. Things are moving a little too fast for him.

PAUL

... I've just lied to my wife, and now you're asking me to spy on a man I consider a friend... I don't know if I want to get involved in this...

WICKS

Your "friend" is a traitor, Dr. Fisher, and you don't have to get "involved." It's a one shot deal. Take the picture and you're finished.

Paul still says nothing; Baker leans in for the kill:

BAKER

You work in a nice safe lab, making things that hurt people, but when things get dicey, you turn away. That about the size of it?

A manipulation, playing on his guilt; and then, there's the fact that a sexy woman is intimating that he might be a coward. They hold a look for a very long beat... then Paul takes camera and the paper, and we

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. FISHER HOME - STAIRCASE - DAY

Paul comes down the stairs. We get the sense that he and Kate didn't talk last night after he came home (she was already sleep). He enters.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Kate is cleaning up, Andrew is finishing his cereal - and text messaging. He hides the message as Paul enters. Paul notices, but doesn't pry into it.

PAUL  
Good morning.

KATE  
(distant)  
Good morning.

ANDREW  
(neutral)  
Good morning.

PAUL  
(to Andrew)  
You ready for the chemistry test?

ANDREW  
I guess so.

PAUL  
You're still mad about being grounded.

A beat, and Andrew looks up.

ANDREW  
Actually, I'm not. I understand why  
you did it, and I'm sorry I lied.

Paul is surprised, to say the least.

PAUL  
... well, good. Thank you.

ANDREW  
Yeah. Gotta run, see you tonight.

He stands, smiles and leaves. Paul stares after him:

PAUL  
... who was that?

Kate doesn't answer; she's got something else on her mind. He knows exactly what it is. He changes gears:

PAUL (CONT'D)

Look, about last night. I really am sorry...

KATE

I don't want to make a big thing out of it, but I can't pretend it didn't hurt. I felt like a fool.

PAUL

I know. I told you, the system crashed...

KATE

You were already on your way! It seems to me if you cared enough you'd have managed to...

PAUL

Kate I wanted to be with you more than anything in else in the world...

KATE

Then why weren't you?

He steps towards her, takes her arms.

PAUL

Because there was nothing I could do. I was trapped, literally trapped!

His intensity is convincing - she calms down.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Kate, I love you. We're going to make this work.

He's very close to her now. He kisses her, tentatively at first, then with more feeling... she responds. We can feel the heat - there's passion between them; and when the kiss ends, we sense that some of the damage has been repaired.

KATE

Sorry if I overreacted...

PAUL

I should have called. It won't happen again.

She smiles.

KATE

... we'll make up for it tonight.

He reacts - realizes tonight isn't going to be a great time for repairing the relationship, though he can hardly say that now. She thinks he doesn't remember:

KATE (CONT'D)  
 (off his hesitation)  
 The party, remember? We'll spend  
 the whole night together...

PAUL  
 ... of course...

He manages to sound pleased, but he knows it's not going to be that simple. Off this we

CUT TO:

EXT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - NIGHT

Paul and Kate emerge from Paul's car as a valet hands him a ticket. Paul is dressed in a suit, Kate looks stunning. Other well-heeled COUPLES are in evidence, all heading for the main building of the NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM. There's a SECURITY GUARD at the door, checking off the guests.

ON PAUL

Uptight - wants to be attentive to Kate, but also thinking about what he has to do. Kate is upbeat. She teases Paul:

KATE  
 That English Lord isn't going to be  
 here, is he?

PAUL  
 Edwards? I don't know. Why?

KATE  
 Don't you remember? He was the one  
 who tried to grope me at the bar.

PAUL  
 Oh, right...

He manages a smile. They pass through security, and Kate slips her arm under his as they step inside...

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS

A lot of distinguished-looking men, some of foreign appearance (e.g., in Arab robes), and a number of beautiful women, most younger than the men. Waiters glide by with trays of hors-d'oeuvres. Some guests casually examine the various exhibits, others gather in small groups to talk business.

PAUL AND KATE

Make their way through the room. They overhear snatches of conversations, including a variety of accents:

VARIOUS VOICES

... the new contract with Saudis is  
win-win... Chavez doesn't understand  
what he's dealing with... actually,  
I think the ambassador's here  
tonight... [etc.]

Even in this crowd, Kate turns a few heads. But Paul remains distracted, which she notes.

KATE

Honey, relax...

He responds, squeezing her hand and smiling at her. But part of him isn't in the moment and she knows it.

SAME - LATER

Paul and Kate circulate, but Paul is looking for Barry, and then he sees him, across the room, talking with someone.

ON BARRY

Who notices Paul watching him, nods. Paul smiles back. From this point on, Paul has to keep an eye on him, hopefully without Barry noticing again.

SAME - LATER

Kate and Paul stand in a circle of half a dozen people, including an older man Kate has unwillingly charmed (DANI). He speaks with an Eastern European accent. Meanwhile Paul sees Barry start to move into a far part of the room. He knows he has to follow...

DANI

... then, through my contacts at the  
embassy, I became involved in the  
defense industry. Coming to this  
country was a great blessing.

(beat)

And what do you do?

KATE

I'm a surgical nurse.

DANI

Lovely. You save lives, most people  
in this room try to end them.

(to Paul)

You must be proud.

PAUL

Yes, I am. You should hear some of her war stories. Tell him about that thing last month. You know, the wrong rib...?

KATE

Oh, it's boring medical stuff.

DANI

No, please I'm fascinated.

KATE

Well, the patient had been in an accident, and we had to remove a severely fractured rib. You'd think it would be obvious which rib...

Under this Paul takes the chance to move away. He turns back and sees:

KATE

in mid-story. She turns to look at Paul - or rather, at the place he'd been standing a moment before, is flustered to see him suddenly gone, looks around briefly but doesn't see him, then turns back to Dani.

PAUL

Knows he's letting her down again, but has no choice. He tracks Barry, while trying to stay out of Barry's direct line of sight. After a few beats:

BARRY

Reacts, then reaches into his pocket and takes out a cell phone, answers. He speaks briefly, then puts it back in his pocket. He looks around, as if to make sure the conversation was unobserved, then begins making his way through the crowd.

PAUL

Follows. The two men work their way through the crowd, and then Paul sees Barry slip through a door marked EXIT. Paul follows, opens the door... a STAIRCASE leads to the next level down. As Paul cautiously descends the stairs

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - MAIN PARTY ROOM

Kate has extricated herself from her admirer, is now looking for Paul. She doesn't see him, but does see Frank:

FRANK

Hey, Sis. How you doing?

KATE

Fine.

FRANK

(re: the party)  
What do you think?

KATE

Very nice. Terrific setting.

FRANK

Yeah, the company likes to do things right. It was my idea, actually, to rent this place.

(beat)

Where's Paul?

KATE

I've been wondering that myself. He ditched me a few minutes ago...

FRANK

What do you mean?

KATE

Left me with a bunch of strangers and slipped off. And that's after standing me up at dinner last night...

FRANK

... he stood you up?

KATE

Yeah, he had to work. You know, when the system crashed.

Frank reacts - he knows there was no system crash. But one of his few redeeming features is his genuine affection for his sister. He decides not to worry her further.

FRANK

... I thought things were going better with you two.

KATE

So did I. Maybe I was kidding myself.

FRANK

He has to be around here somewhere...

A beat, as they look around for Paul, don't see him.

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - LOWER LEVEL

This is the museum's workshop. There are exhibits under renovation, skeletons of mammals and dinosaurs in various stages of reconstruction, etc.

Paul moves silently down a corridor, just before it intersects with another corridor. From around the corner her hears muted VOICES. Paul peers very cautiously around the corner:

PAUL'S POV

Halfway down the next corridor Barry talks with a tough-looking man (BURKE). Burke produces an ENVELOPE and hands it to Barry, who glances at the contents for a beat, then puts it inside his own coat pocket. Under this

PAUL

Takes out the special camera the Handlers gave him, and, staying out of sight as much as possible, snaps a PICTURE of Burke and Barry.

ON BURKE

Who glimpses something out of the corner of his eye - turns... nothing there.

BARRY

What's the matter?

BURKE

Were you followed?

BARRY

Of course not.

Burke holds his look, decides Barry is sincere.

BURKE

All right. Go back upstairs. Use this staircase, it's closer.

Barry nods, goes up a nearby staircase. We stay with Burke, who begins moving rapidly toward the intersection of the two corridors... as he moves he takes out a GUN and screws on a SILENCER...

IN THE OTHER CORRIDOR

Paul is moving back towards the staircase he came down on... at first he doesn't hear Burke then the footsteps are audible... Paul looks back just as Burke turns the corner...

Paul begins running for the staircase at the end of the corridor... he dodges among various exhibits... meanwhile Burke takes aim with a silenced GUN and FIRES...

A display case shatters, a PREHISTORIC MAN takes it right between the eyes... Paul keeps moving... Burke FIRES again, and the skull of a Tyrannosaurus explodes... [note that through all this Burke never gets a look at Paul's face...]

Paul makes it to the door, yanks it open

IN THE STAIRWELL

He sprints upstairs... as he opens the top stairwell door  
Burke barges through the bottom one and up the stairs..

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - MAIN PARTY ROOM

Burke opens the door cautiously, hiding his gun, and looks  
inside... the party is in full swing. Burke, foiled, backs  
out, letting the door close behind him. Nearby we find

PAUL

Positioned so he sees Burke give up. Paul finds a relatively  
private area and pulls himself together - or tries to. He  
manages to call up the photo of Barry and Burke, then enters  
a number and presses SEND.

ON THE PHONE

We see the words: PHOTO SENT. A beat later the phone is  
SNATCHED from Paul's hands... by Frank. He examines the  
unusual-looking phone curiously.

FRANK

What's this? A special phone for...  
special phone calls...?

Paul takes the phone back.

PAUL

It's a spare I use sometimes. Is  
that a problem?

FRANK

Not for me. Kate might be interested.

PAUL

What's that supposed to mean?

FRANK

It means you lied about having dinner  
with her last night. She said you  
never showed up. Where were you?

PAUL

None of your business.

FRANK

I don't want to see my sister hurt.

PAUL

Keep out of my personal life...

He breaks off, noticing Kate across the room. He walks over to her. She reacts... we watch from Frank's POV. We don't have to hear the words to sense what's happening - Paul tries to explain without really being able to, while Kate avoids a scene yet is very upset. Off this, and Frank watching

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER HOME - NIGHT

A WALL CLOCK shows 3:30 in the morning. Paul, troubled, sits downstairs by a phone - finally picks it up, dials.

INT. BAKER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Baker is also awake. Dressed in panties and a loose-fitting tanktop, she sits alone in the darkness, sipping a drink and looking out over the city (the view compensates for the small size of her apartment). Her CELL PHONE RINGS.

After a beat she switches on a light on a nearby table - where a PICTURE OF A BOY, two years old, is prominently displayed. She picks up the phone:

BAKER  
(into phone)  
Baker.

INTERCUT:

PAUL  
This is Paul Fisher. You said you were available 24/7...

BAKER  
No problem.

PAUL  
I emailed the photograph from the party.

BAKER  
Yeah, we got it. Thank you, it's just what we needed.

PAUL  
I almost got killed doing it.

BAKER  
But you're all right.

PAUL  
... yeah, I'm all right.

BAKER  
Good.

A beat. That's the extent of her apparent sympathy.

PAUL

What happens next? With Barry, I mean.

BAKER

You don't have to worry about that, Dr. Fisher. We'll take it from here.

INT. FISHER BEDROOM

Kate stirs in bed, also not sleeping well after the party. She wakes up - notices Paul is gone. She glances around, sees the clock on the nightstand, and next to it a PHONE. One line is lit. As Kate reacts -

INT. FISHER HOME

PAUL

... it's just that, in some ways I've come to think of him like a little brother...

BAKER

He's a traitor.

PAUL

... even so, I'd like to know what's going to happen to him. If there's a way to, say, get him to cooperate rather than -

BAKER

Dr. Fisher. You know how in spy novels they're always saying you should only know what you need to know?

PAUL

Yeah.

BAKER

Well, believe it. Goodbye, and thanks for your help.

She hangs up. Glances at the picture of the BOY, then turns out the light. Paul hangs up as well.

IN THE BEDROOM

Kate watches as the light on the bedside phone goes dark. Off her growing suspicion

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

KATE (O.S.)  
 ... it just feels like he's not  
 telling me something.

Under this, we're CLOSE ON KATE'S HANDS as she removes her wedding ring and pins it to her green scrubs. She's talking to another O.R. nurse, ANGELA, mid-thirties, as they wash up.

ANGELA  
 His job does require him to keep  
 secrets, right?

KATE  
 Yes, but he's never made phone calls  
 in the middle of the night.  
 (beat)  
 And the way he avoided me at the  
 party... after standing me up at  
 dinner...

A beat. It's hanging in the air, so Angela says it.

ANGELA  
 Do you think he might be having an  
 affair?

KATE  
 ... no. He's not that type of man.

But it's clear the thought has occurred to her.

ANGELA  
 (wryly)  
 That's what I said about Ernie.  
 Also Benjamin. Wrong, and wrong. I  
 admit, after twenty years of marriage  
 you're a lot further down the road  
 than I ever got, but still...

KATE  
 I just don't believe Paul would cheat.

ANGELA  
 Well, I know the number of a good  
 P.I. if you ever need it.

This is going a little too far.

KATE  
 (a little offended)  
 Angela, I'm not going to hire a  
 private detective to spy on him!

Angela shrugs, have it your way, then moves away. Off Kate, troubled

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - DAY

Paul, also troubled by recent events, has been working late. We find him as he packs up, leaves his office.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The place is deserted, except for one other office, where

BARRY

is also working late.

RESUME PAUL

Who has to pass by Barry's open door to get to the elevators.

PAUL  
 Good night, Barry.

He keeps walking.

BARRY (O.S.)  
 ... Paul...

Paul stops, turns, walks back into

INT. BARRY'S OFFICE

Barry looks up.

BARRY  
 I finished that variance analysis.

PAUL  
 Good, that's great.

Barry seems to be looking for approval, isn't getting it.

BARRY  
 Is everything all right?

PAUL  
 Sure. What do you mean?

BARRY

... at the party, I saw you looking at me a couple of times, I don't know, kind of funny. And today it seems like you've been avoiding me.  
 (attempt at lightness)  
 ... you getting ready to fire me?

On Paul for a beat, struggling with his conscience, and unable to stop himself from coming clean. He closes the door.

PAUL

I wish it was that simple.  
 (off Barry's look)  
 I know what you're doing. I know you're planning to sell the a-chip to another country.

Barry tries to keep a poker face, doesn't succeed.

BARRY

What is this, a joke?

PAUL

Not only do I know, so does the NSA... they asked me to spy on you.  
 (off Barry's look)  
 At the party last night, I took a picture of you and the guy you met with, downstairs. The NSA has it.

BARRY

... Jesus Christ. And you said we were friends! How could you do this to me?

PAUL

Do this to you? What about what you're doing!

Barry gives a contemptuous laugh.

BARRY

You're such a goddam boy scout. You don't see it, to you?  
 (beat)  
 We're the brains, we invent things. Then suits like Frank, who couldn't do what we do in a hundred years, sell what we create for billions and give us crumbs! I just want to get what I deserve...

PAUL

Is that it, the money? Or is it about proving how smart you are, you can get away with anything?

Barry starts to answer, then folds back into himself with a short, almost hysterical laugh.

BARRY

I don't know what it's about, okay?  
I told you before, I am what I am!

PAUL

It's treason, Barry. You can't make  
it go away with words.

BARRY

... Paul, listen, the fact is the  
amount of money I'm getting is  
unreal... I'll cut you in... six  
figures, easy...

PAUL

You're not listening. The NSA knows.  
It's over.

(beat)

I'm trying to help you salvage your  
life here. Get you some help. This  
is the only chance you'll get, but  
you have to cooperate. Let me call  
NSA, set up a meeting. Tonight.

Under this, Barry turns away, looks out the window, perhaps to cover how distraught he really is. Paul steps closer.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's the first time you've ever done  
anything like this. Do whatever  
they want, tell them what you know,  
maybe you can avoid jail or at least  
hard time. Hell, I don't know, maybe  
you can even plead insanity...

(beat)

Barry?

A beat, then Barry turns to face Paul.

BARRY

What makes you think this is the  
first time?

Paul is too stunned to answer. They hold a look, then Barry's expression becomes strangely calm, as if he's suddenly made a difficult but inevitable decision.

BARRY (CONT'D)

You haven't left me much choice. In  
fact, no choice at all.

He opens a desk drawer. He takes out a REVOLVER.

ON PAUL

Shocked, terrified... realizes he's about to die... the two men hold a look... then

BARRY

Puts the weapon to his own head -

ON PAUL

Who barely has time to scream -

PAUL

NO!

- before the SHOT SOUNDS and DROPS OF BLOOD splatter on Paul's face and shirt.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh, God... Oh, Jesus...

On Paul, stunned... he drops to his knees next to Barry, but it's obvious there's nothing he can do. He staggers to his feet, opens the door and walks into

THE HALLWAY

He looks around... there's no sign that anyone's there... until the ELEVATOR BELL rings. Paul closes Barry's office door, takes refuge in a nearby cubicle...

A JANITOR steps out of the elevator, pushing a trash can ahead of him. His manner is routine, there's no sign that he heard the shot. Paul waits for him to move out of sight then moves to an exit door and starts down the stairs as we

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED STREET

The GAS COMPANY VAN is parked by the curb. Paul's car is parked behind it.

BAKER (O.S.)

What the hell were you thinking?

INT. VAN

A dim light casts an eerie glow on Paul and Baker, alone in the van. Paul is still visibly shaken.

PAUL

I thought he'd listen to me, I was trying to help... I'm sorry.

BAKER

This is what happens when you don't keep your mouth shut. People get hurt.

Paul nods, numbly.

PAUL

What do I do about Barry?

BAKER

We'll cover up his death for a couple of days. You say nothing to anyone, ever.

Paul nods again.

BAKER (CONT'D)

That still leaves us with a big problem.

Paul looks up.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Barry set up a meeting with a middleman, tomorrow. The middleman was going to take him to the ultimate buyers. We were going to follow and make the bust.

(beat)

You're going to have to take Barry's place.

PAUL

... what?

BAKER

We know from the emails and the phone calls, neither the middleman nor the buyers have actually met Barry. They don't know what he looks like.

PAUL

The guy in the museum saw Barry face to face...

BAKER

We took care of him, he's out of play. No one you'll be meeting with has ever seen Barry.

PAUL

... you're the NSA, you must have a hundred people you can send...

BAKER

You know the technology. You know the company. You knew Barry. We can send one of our agents - but if you go, it'll increase the chance of success.

PAUL

It'll also increase the chances of my getting killed. Taking a picture is one thing, but this...

BAKER

We'll be monitoring the situation. We'll be ready to move in any time.

Paul shakes his head - no.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Barry's dead because of you. You owe us.

PAUL

This is your line of work, not mine. I just watched a good friend blow his brains out... and I'm finished...

He jerks open the door and climbs out, then walks to his car. Baker watches for a long beat - from her expression we know this is far from over, as we

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Paul stands at the sink, sipping coffee, staring out the window, still reliving Barry's suicide. Kate enters, holding Paul's shirt from the night before.

PAUL

Good morning.

KATE

I found your shirt in the dryer...

Paul reacts - he'd forgotten about laundering his bloody shirt.

PAUL

Right. Thanks.

KATE

Since when do you do your own laundry, in the middle of the night?

PAUL

It got stained in the lab...

A beat.

KATE  
Don't lie to me, Paul.

We can read the internal struggle on his face, but after what happened the last time he opened his mouth he doesn't dare tell Kate anything. The dialogue builds and OVERLAPS:

KATE (CONT'D)  
Are you having an affair?

PAUL  
For God's sake, of course not...  
I've been on this... special  
project...

KATE  
Don't try to tell me this is about  
work...

PAUL  
... the most difficult thing I've  
ever been through, I can't tell you  
any more than that...

KATE  
I don't believe you...

PAUL  
It's the truth... and it's over now,  
I promise...

KATE  
Stop jacking me around, Paul, I just  
want you to tell me...

PAUL  
Kate, listen to me...

Under this he tries to take hold of her, willing her to listen as he did in the earlier scene but this time she doesn't go along, she jerks away from him... they stumble and knock a plate the floor. It SHATTERS. They stare at it for a beat, then Kate runs out of the room.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Kate...!

He follows as far as the front door, but she gets into her car and drives away, as we

CUT TO:

INT. CLAYMORE INDUSTRIES

Paul enters, we TRACK him as he walks past Barry's office - in spite of himself, he stops, looks inside:

BARRY'S OFFICE - PAUL'S POV

It's pristine - not the slightest trace of Barry's bloody suicide is visible.

ON PAUL

surprised at the thoroughness of NSA's clean-up work, and still shaken by the memory of the previous night. He's interrupted by Jeff, who assumes he's looking for Barry:

JEFF

Barry called in sick. Do you still want to test the atmospheric adjustments?

PAUL

Yeah, we might as well get started.

JEFF

(hesitates)  
... it's just, Barry knows the parameters really well, and it might make sense to wait until he...

PAUL

(a little too sharply)  
I said get started, all right?

JEFF

... fine. I just wanted to be sure.

He leaves. Paul knows he overreacted, but is too strung out to try to smooth things over. Meantime, in the b.g., Laura has been biding her time. Now she steps forward.

LAURA

Paul, could I talk to you?

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Laura and Paul stand just inside his office door. Laura is upset, doesn't know how to begin, finally blurts out:

LAURA

I don't believe Barry called in sick.

PAUL

What do you mean?

LAURA

He didn't come home last night at all.

PAUL

Well, you know, Barry can be unpredictable -

LAURA

(interrupts)

I know what Barry's like, I've been living with him for six months. But the fact is he never just disappears. He always tells me where he is because he knows I worry.

(beat)

I just wondered if you know anything.

PAUL

(guilty, defensive)

Why would I?

LAURA

... you're his boss, you work together all the time...

PAUL

I just meant... I don't know any more about this than you do...

LAURA

I'm thinking of calling the police...

PAUL

There's no point. They won't do anything for forty-eight hours. The truth is, people disappear all the time, usually because they want to...

LAURA

Barry wouldn't do that without telling me. I have a really bad feeling in my gut about this...

She can't help herself, she tears up.

PAUL

Laura... wait one more day. If he doesn't turn up, we'll both go to the police. And we'll get company security on it, too. All right?

She nods, tries to compose herself.

EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PAUL'S OFFICE

Paul and Laura come outside. Laura is still upset, Paul is comforting her... he puts a hand on her shoulder, she leans against him lightly, in gratitude for his support. It's innocent, but doesn't necessarily look that way to

FRANK

Who happens to see the moment from down the hall, watching.

RESUME PAUL

Who starts to go back to his office when he hears:

SECRETARY (O.S.)  
Dr. Fisher?

Paul turns.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
Your son's on the line. It sounds  
like it might be an emergency...

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

Paul walks in, picks up his office line.

PAUL  
Andrew?

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

INT. TIJUANA - JAIL - DAY

Andrew stands in a crowded room. In the b.g. CAPTAIN SOLAREZ is with another teenager, GARY. Other COPS and PERPS are in evidence. It's a scary rat hole of a police station. Andrew is near tears.

ANDREW  
Dad? I really screwed up.

PAUL  
What's wrong?

ANDREW  
I'm in jail. I'm really sorry. I  
was with Gary Crawford and he bought  
some pills...

PAUL  
What are you talking about, what  
kind of pills?

ANDREW

Uppers.

PAUL

Bought them where, on the street?

ANDREW

Yeah...

PAUL

For God's sake, Andrew...

ANDREW

I know, I'm so sorry. Please come get me out of here.

PAUL

Where are you?

ANDREW

...Tijuana...

PAUL

Tijuana!? You're telling me you went to Mexico to buy drugs?

ANDREW

... it wasn't like that... Gary knew a guy who sells uppers cheap, he just asked me to come along because he didn't want to go alone, so I said okay...

PAUL

Why?

ANDREW

... a couple of hundred bucks... a little spending money...

PAUL

For God's sake, Andrew...

ANDREW

Dad, please. You don't know what this is like, just get me out of here...

Paul hears the panic in Andrew's voice, forces himself to calm down.

PAUL

Is there someone I can talk to? One of the officers?

Andrew holds the phone out to CAPTAIN SOLAREZ.

ANDREW

My Dad.

The Captain, a decent man, takes the phone.

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

Mister Fisher. I'm Captain Solarez,  
Tijuana police.

PAUL

How serious is this?

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

Very, I'm afraid. Your son had a  
considerable quantity of illegal  
drugs in his possession.

PAUL

He says he was with a friend, the  
friend made the purchase...

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

Even if that's true, Mr. Fisher, in  
the eyes of the law, they are both  
equally guilty.

A beat.

PAUL

How do I arrange bail?

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

Bail is a problem. He's not a  
citizen, he'll be considered a flight  
risk.

PAUL

He's a kid. Not even seventeen...

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

I think you'll agree, Mister Fisher,  
he's old enough to know better. He  
had enough drugs to sell, which down  
here means a long sentence.

PAUL

You're saying there's no way I can  
get him out of jail, even temporarily?

CAPTAIN SOLAREZ

Not for quite a while. Weeks, maybe  
months - if at all. I'm sorry. He  
seems like a nice boy, but, as I  
said, it is very serious.

Paul absorbs this.

PAUL

Thanks for your time. Can I talk to him again please?

Captain Solarez hands the phone to Andrew.

ANDREW

Dad, you've got to get me out of here. I'll never do anything wrong again, I swear, just... I want to come home...

PAUL

I'll do everything I can. Hang in there, I'll be in touch soon.

(beat)

I love you.

ANDREW

I love you, too...

He breaks down, which Paul can hear or sense, just as they disconnect. We stay with Paul, fighting panic, trying to come up with a plan... he thinks for a very long beat... then, slowly, like man in a nightmare, dials his cell phone.

PAUL

(into cell)

It's Paul Fisher. I need to see you as soon as possible.

Off this

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - N.D. LOCATION - DAY

Paul, with Baker.

BAKER

We have an agent standing by, ready to go.

PAUL

You said yourself, I'm the best one to do it.

BAKER

You didn't want to.

PAUL

I do now.

BAKER

The meeting's in a few hours. It doesn't allow much time to prepare.

(MORE)

BAKER (CONT'D)

I have to be sure you really mean  
it.

PAUL

You must not have children. Trust  
me when I tell you, I'll do anything  
I have to do to protect my son.  
Anything.

A beat. Baker is more affected than she wants to let on.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You can get him out of jail, right?

BAKER

Yes.

PAUL

And get the charges dropped...  
(she nods)  
Then do it. And I'll go to this  
meeting, pretend to be Barry, whatever  
it takes. Do we have a deal?

BAKER

Not quite.  
(off Paul's look)  
You do your part first, then we'll  
help your son. That's the deal.

A beat.

PAUL

Let's get started.

Off Paul and Baker, holding a look

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

A LARGE COMPUTER SCREEN

Shows a headshot of a thickset thug (HODGES).

BAKER (O.S.)

This is Allen Hodges. He represents  
the buyers. You'll meet him first.  
Alone.

We're in:

INT. NSA OFFICES

Where Wicks and Baker are prepping Paul for the mission.

BAKER

He's dangerous, but he's got no reason  
to hurt you. His job is to take you  
to the buyers and complete the deal.  
You'll meet him here.

THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Show several angles of a run-down commercial building.

RESUME SCENE

BAKER (CONT'D)

He may have a piece of equipment to  
validate the chip, so you'll to take  
a real chip with you. He'll probably  
ask you some questions about it.  
Answer them truthfully.

(Paul nods)

Once he's satisfied, he'll take you  
to the buyers.

PAUL

Where will that be?

BAKER

(smiles slightly)

If we knew that, we wouldn't be asking  
you to do this. We'd just move in  
and arrest the buyers.

PAUL

(dumb question)

... right.

BAKER

We'll be following you the entire way, but not by line of sight. Hodges is too experienced, he might see us. Instead we're going to put a tracker on you.

Wicks steps forward with a large pneumatic hypodermic.

WICKS

It'll be under your skin, in case he searches your clothes. Ready?

Paul nods. Wicks holds the hypodermic against Paul's inner forearm, compresses it. Paul winces. Under this Wicks has taken out a RECEIVER, which he now turns on... it shows a grid map, with a blinking red DOT.

WICKS (CONT'D)

All set.

Paul starts rubbing his arm.

WICKS (CONT'D)

Don't rub it. Those things can be a little sensitive.

Paul grits his teeth, stops rubbing.

PAUL

As soon as Hodges takes me to the buyers, you guys move in...?

BAKER

That's right. Just play along for a minute or two, maybe not even that. Then we'll be there.

Paul hesitates a beat.

PAUL

Whatever happens to me, you get my son out of jail.

BAKER

We will. That's a promise.

They hold a look. It seems personal. Wicks notices.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S CAR -- DAY

Paul is alone in the car. We can see the tension in his face. He looks out the windshield, sees

## THE BUILDING

Whose picture he saw in prep. He parks, gets out. He hesitates slightly, then walks inside.

INT. BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Paul enters an empty room, a counter and shelves; the remnants of a small store. He becomes aware of a GUN pointed at his head. Hodges has appeared silently behind him.

HODGES  
Don't move, Mr. Meyers.

Hodges pats Paul down, finds nothing.

HODGES (CONT'D)  
The chip, please.

Paul produces the chip, trying not to appear as scared as he feels. He's not entirely successful.

HODGES (CONT'D)  
Is everything all right, Mr. Meyers?  
You seem uncomfortable.

PAUL  
I'm fine.

Hodges studies him for a beat, then takes the chip to a piece of equipment on a table. He puts the chip into a slot, presses a button. Lights begin to blink, etc.

HODGES  
It's a solid-state base?

PAUL  
That's right.

HODGES  
And of course, the metal vapor is ionized.

PAUL  
No. That would destabilize the beam.

Hodges nods - this was a trap, but Paul's answer was satisfactory. The equipment stops blinking, produces a low steady beep, which is a good thing.

HODGES  
It seems in order. Shall we go?

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND BUILDING

Hodges and Paul walk out of the building, Hodges gestures to a black town car. He and Paul get in, Hodges driving.

INT. TOWN CAR

Hodges drives - his eyes constantly flit from windshield to mirrors. Baker and Wicks were right to avoid line of sight surveillance.

In fact Hodges is so concerned with the possibility of being followed that he doesn't pay enough attention to the road in front of him - a car pulls out suddenly and Hodges SLAMS ON THE BRAKES, narrowly avoiding a collision.

The town car jerks to a stop... Paul slams forward into the dash, instinctively cushioning the impact with his forearms.

HODGES

Sorry.

PAUL

No problem.

ON PAUL

He looks down at arm - the point of impact against the dash was precisely the point where the tracker was injected into his skin... and Wicks said the tracker was sensitive...

INT. NSA CAR

Wicks is driving, Baker looks at the monitor...

BAKER

Dammit...

She hits some keys.

WICKS

What's wrong?

BAKER

... we lost him...

WICKS

(into radiophone)

All units, ignore prior protocol.

Does any unit have visual contact...?

There's no answer. They look out into the crowded streets - traffic, pedestrians, etc. - Paul could be anywhere.

CUT TO:

## INT. WAREHOUSE

It's an abandoned body shop. Auto parts, hulks, etc., are scattered throughout. Hodges and Paul enter. Waiting for them are two KOREANS in business suits and two BODYGUARDS. One of the Koreans, KIM, steps forward.

KIM

Mr. Meyers. I am Kim Chong. I hope this will be the beginning of a fruitful relationship.

PAUL

Me, too.

They shake hands. Kim gestures to the other Korean, who puts a briefcase on a table and opens it.

## INSIDE THE BRIEFCASE

Are stacks of hundred dollar bills.

## RESUME SCENE

Paul looks at it and nods.

KIM

Perhaps you'd like to count it.

PAUL

No, that's okay. I trust you.

Kim gives a little bow of appreciation. But Hodges already regards Paul with a tiny bit of suspicion - this only deepens it. Under this, Hodges hands Kim the chip.

KIM

You tested it?

HODGES

It's the real deal.

Under this Paul tries not to look nervous - but where are Wicks and Baker?

KIM

(to Hodges)

Then if you'll hand Mr. Meyers the briefcase, we can go our separate ways.

HODGES

Yeah. But I tell you what, I think we should bring Mr. Meyers here along.

PAUL

What are you talking about? Why?

HODGES

Call it a precaution.

(to Kim)

Something about this guy doesn't feel right. We can let him go when we're sure we're in the clear.

KIM

As you wish.

PAUL

This is not part of the deal...

HODGES

You're coming.

He produces a GUN, gestures toward a back entrance. Kim and the others leave, Paul has no choice but to follow.

EXT. REAR OF WAREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

The group emerges into a parking area behind the warehouse. A CHOPPER awaits.

ON PAUL

He knows the chopper is bad news... he looks around discreetly ... maybe the NSA is going to swoop in here...?

RESUME SCENE

No such luck. Kim and his bodyguards enter the chopper, Hodges prods Paul, who has to get inside as well.

INT. CHOPPER

Paul sits, Hodges enters and sits next to him. It's clear now that the cavalry isn't coming. Paul looks down at his forearm, knowing his worst fear has been confirmed - the tracker has been damaged and he's on his own.

THROUGH THE CHOPPER'S GLASS

We catch a glimpse of Paul's face as the chopper lifts off.

ON THE CHOPPER

Cruising along, a hundred feet or so off the ground.

INT. CHOPPER

Paul knows he has to do something; Kim's getting away with the chip, Hodges might decide to kill him, it's even possible NSA won't help Andrew... he looks out the window...

PAUL'S POV - THE OUTSKIRTS OF L.A.

He catches a glimpse of a patch of blue up ahead... it's HANSEN LAKE (off the 210)... the chopper will cross it soon...

INT. CHOPPER

Paul looks around... sees a FIRE EXTINGUISHER attached to the inside of the door next to him... a desperate plan begins to form in his mind...

ON THE CHOPPER

As it begins to move over the lake...

INT. CHOPPER

On Paul - it's now or never... his hand moves toward the fire extinguisher... he grabs the extinguisher and DISCHARGES THE EXTINGUISHER into Hodges' face... Hodges screams, drops his gun...

In the front seat, Kim turns around just in time to get a faceful of foam - he also screams, puts his hands to this face... Paul reaches into Kim's pocket and grabs the CHIP.

By now, in the back row, the two bodyguards have had time to take in what's happening... they start to draw their weapons from under their coats... Paul has seconds left... he opens the chopper door, looks down - a hundred feet below

THE LAKE

Awaits... if he has the nerve...

ON PAUL

For an instant he hesitates... then JUMPS...

EXT. WIDE ON SCENE

The chopper flies on as Paul, hands raised, legs together, toes pointed, plummets feet first towards the lake...

EXT. THE LAKE

Paul splashes through the surface and

UNDER THE SURFACE

Where his momentum keeps him going... and going...

CLOSE ON PAUL

Dazed but not quite unconscious, he comes around... begins kicking and thrashing desperately for the surface...

## EXT. THE LAKE

Paul breaks the surface, gasping wildly for breath, fighting the shock and the weight of his clothes... he begins swimming for shore... at last he gets close enough so he can touch bottom...

## EXT. SHORELINE

He scrambles onto dry land, exhausted but safe... for about one second, when he suddenly becomes aware of the ROAR of an engine... he looks up...

## THE CHOPPER

Is coming straight for him, very close to the ground - he flings himself aside, the landing runners miss his head by a foot...

Hodges and the bodyguards FIRE their guns at him for good measure as the chopper buzzes past but he's not hit...

## THE CHOPPER

Wheels around, comes back...

## PAUL

Keeps running near the dam as the chopper stalks him... making pass after pass, Hodges and the bodyguards FIRING but never quite managing to bring Paul down...

Paul manages to stay clear but he's becoming exhausted... then he sees, around the corner of the dam's structure...

## A PASSAGEWAY

Wide enough for the helicopter, but spanned by a FOOTBRIDGE which he can see but which the chopper can't...

Paul steps out, in plain view... the chopper banks, comes towards him... he starts running, then turns the corner into

## THE PASSAGEWAY

The chopper follows... the pilot sees the footbridge, tries to pull up... too late... the chopper smashes into it and bursts into a ball of fire, which nobody will survive. Off Paul, badly shaken but still alive, we

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

EXT. HANSEN DAM -- LATER

A team of NSA agents has cordoned off the area and is combing through the wreckage of the chopper. Paul waits wearily nearby. A car drives up, pulls to a stop. Wicks and Baker get out, Baker is carrying a cell phone. Paul goes to them:

PAUL

What about my son...

Baker hands the cell phone hands to Paul, who grabs it -

PAUL (CONT'D)

Andrew? Where are you?

INT. /EXT ANDREW'S CAR - HIGHWAY

Andrew and Gary... Andrew on his cell.

ANDREW

We're back in the U.S. They just came in and let us go.

PAUL

Listen to me. Drive straight home and stay here, we'll talk later. And don't tell your mother. I...

He hesitates, glances around. What he means is "I can't tell her what really happened" but what he says is:

PAUL (CONT'D)

I don't want to upset her.

Great news, as far as Andrew's concerned.

ANDREW

Whatever you say, Dad.

They disconnect. Paul slumps back. Baker has been listening to Paul's side of the conversation, watching him.

BAKER

Sorry for the complications. The tracker stopped transmitting.

PAUL

Yeah, I figured.

WICKS

They can't find the chip. I suppose it's at the bottom of the lake...?

PAUL

... I forgot.

He holds out his hand - he's been carrying it ever since he jumped out of the chopper. Baker, impressed, takes it.

BAKER

We'll clean you up, then we need to debrief you, probably take a couple hours. Then you'll be free to go.

Paul nods.

BAKER (CONT'D)

What happened here - we'll put out cover stories, of course you won't be mentioned. And you tell nobody, ever. Right?

PAUL

Right.

Wicks and Baker escort him towards the waiting vehicle. Off Paul, spent, emotionally and physically

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kate, alone, sits on the couch, her expression hard. She looks up at the sound of a key in the front door. Paul enters, cleaned up but still exhausted.

KATE

Where have you been? I've been trying to get hold of you for hours.

PAUL

What's wrong?

KATE

What's wrong is, it's after nine. Andrew didn't come home for dinner, he finally got here half an hour ago, I can't get a straight answer out of him about where he's been, and the whole time I have no idea where you are. That's what's wrong.

PAUL

I'm sorry. I'll talk to him.

KATE

Where were you?

PAUL

Work.

KATE

I called your office. They said you left before lunch and haven't been back since.

PAUL

I had meetings downtown at corporate.

KATE

I tried corporate. They said you weren't there.

PAUL

They made a mistake.

She shakes her head angrily, Paul cuts her off:

PAUL (CONT'D)

Let me deal with Andrew. Then we'll talk.

Without waiting for an answer Paul starts upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER HOME - ANDREW'S ROOM - NIGHT

Andrew lies on his bed text messaging when Paul enters. Andrew closes his phone and sits up - just in time for Paul to grab him by the shirt and yank him to his feet. Andrew is shocked.

PAUL

What the hell is wrong with you?

ANDREW

... I'm sorry...

PAUL

You could have ruined your life - and mine and your mother's too!

ANDREW

I know, I'm sorry, really...

PAUL

I'm not punishing you, because I don't want her to know what you did, but if you ever put either of us through anything like this again, your life as you know it will be over for a very long time. You got that?

ANDREW

... I got it.

Paul half releases, half tosses Andrew back on the bed. If Andrew ever doubted his father could be tough, that doubt is gone. Paul starts to go back downstairs to deal with Kate.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Dad. Thanks again for getting me out.

Paul looks back at his son, nods, his anger spent. Andrew begins to open up a bit, exhilarated by his narrow escape.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Truth is, I've never been so scared in my life. And those Mexican cops are good. I mean, the ones that stopped us, when they came up to the car, they already knew our names.

PAUL

... what do you mean?

ANDREW

Yeah, one of them walked right up and he goes, "Senor Fisher, please step out of the car." It was weird.

A beat, as Paul realizes the implication...

INT. FISHER HOME

Paul charges down the stairs, where Kate is waiting.

PAUL

I'll be back as soon as I can. There's something I have to care of.

KATE

What are you talking about - what about us...?

But he's gone. Kate, stunned and confused, looks upstairs, where Andrew is standing, also looking puzzled.

KATE (CONT'D)

What happened?

ANDREW

... nothing. He just suddenly turned and ran out.

He shrugs, goes back to his room. Stay on Kate, hearing the car start up in the driveway. After a beat, she walks to a nearby table, picks up the phone, dial.

KATE  
 (into phone)  
 Angela, it's Kate. You know that  
 private detective you mentioned...  
 do you have the number handy?

Off this

CUT TO:

INT. NSA OFFICES

We open mid-scene. Paul confronts Baker and Wicks.

PAUL  
 You sons of bitches! You set him  
 up!

WICKS  
 Calm down...

Paul ignores this, focuses on Baker.

PAUL  
 The cop knew his name before he even  
 busted him. You tipped them off.  
 Had him arrested and knew I'd come  
 to you for help.

By now Paul is in Baker's face:

PAUL (CONT'D)  
 If this is your idea of protecting  
 the country, than God help the  
 country!

Wicks puts a hand on Paul's shoulder.

WICKS  
 You need to back off...

Paul wheels, PUNCHES Wicks... Wicks staggers back, almost  
 goes down but doesn't... there's a short scuffle, not a full-  
 fledged fistfight, then Wicks has Paul in a hold, face against  
 the wall. Paul stops struggling.

BAKER  
 Do we need cuffs, Dr. Fisher...?

A beat, then Paul shakes his head No. Wicks releases him,  
 steps back. Baker looks at Wicks, nods her head toward the  
 door. Reluctantly, Wicks leaves the room, closing the door  
 behind him.

BAKER (CONT'D)  
 We didn't send your son to Mexico to  
 buy drugs.

PAUL  
Maybe not. But you used him to get  
at me.

BAKER  
You should have helped us in the  
first place.

PAUL  
Go to hell.

A beat. Baker maintains an even tone:

BAKER  
The fact is, we still need your help.

PAUL  
You must be out of your mind.

BAKER  
Barry wasn't the only traitor inside  
your company.

A beat.

PAUL  
... what are you talking about?

BAKER  
We found something in the wreck of  
the helicopter that makes it clear  
he wasn't working alone.

PAUL  
... who else was involved?

BAKER  
That's what we need you to find out.

PAUL  
... is it Frank Conroy?

BAKER  
It's possible. We just don't know.

PAUL  
I'm the last person you should come  
to, he's my brother-in-law...

BAKER  
We don't have time to start over,  
Dr. Fisher. We need you.

PAUL  
I almost got killed - twice... my  
family's coming apart... I can't  
help you...

He walks to the door, turns the knob. It's locked.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Open the door.

A beat.

BAKER  
We made those drug charges against  
your son disappear. We can make  
them come back.  
(beat as Paul REACTS)  
The evidence is in our possession.  
The cops will do whatever we tell  
them.

Paul feels the trap closing...

BAKER (CONT'D)  
One word from us, he's back in that  
Mexican jail. The penalty for  
possession with intent to sell is  
ten years.

PAUL  
I'll make sure every paper in the  
country gets this story. It'll blow  
up in your face...

BAKER  
I don't even exist if I don't want  
to. I can vanish in thirty minutes.

Paul is enraged, but helpless. Baker produces a cell phone,  
puts it on the table between them.

BAKER (CONT'D)  
This cell phone is keyed to your  
fingerprints. No one can use it but  
you. Have it with you at all times.

Paul just shakes his head... no way...

BAKER (CONT'D)  
Dr. Fisher. You can be smart. Help  
us and help your country. Or you  
can be very foolish and destroy your  
son's life. Your choice.

PAUL  
... you wouldn't do this... you're  
bluffing.  
(desperate)  
You're bluffing!

Baker stares back at him... sure as hell doesn't look like  
she's bluffing.

She's inside his head now, and he's beginning to suspect that he may never be able to get her out, as we

CUT TO:

INT. FISHER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Paul, Kate and Andrew at breakfast, the mood subdued. A sense of secrets kept hovers in the room. After a few beats:

ANDREW

Taylor's having a birthday party next Friday... okay if I go?

PAUL

Fine with me.

He glances at Kate.

KATE

(to Andrew)

Sure. Just be back by midnight.

ANDREW

Thanks.

A beat. Paul and Kate exchange another glance, then look away. Neither speaks. Then a PHONE RINGS - a slightly unusual tone. Paul reacts - detaches the cell from his belt holder, glances at it.

PAUL

I better take this.

Kate watches as Paul walks out of the kitchen. Andrew watches Kate as she watches Paul, trying to read the situation.

INT. DEN -- CONTINUOUS

Paul enters, closes the door behind him. The PHONE RINGS again. He takes a deep breath, opens it.

PAUL

(into phone)

What do you want?

Off this, we

FADE OUT:

THE END